



INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
AND  
THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS  
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski



## CONFERENCE

### EAST-WEST: RELIGIONS, CENTERS, AND PERIPHERIES

19 – 20 October 2023, Sofia  
Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)  
Shipchenski Prohod Blvd, No. 52, block 17

## PROGRAM

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2023

10:30–11:00

*Registration of Participants*

11:00–12:00

**PLENARY SESSION — HISTORY AND THEORY**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova**

- **PROF. DR. DANIEL VACHKOV, DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES, BAS**  
*Welcome Speech*

#### **Keynote Speakers**

- **PROF. DR. SIMEON EVSTATIEV**, Center for the Study of Religions and the Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *Religions, Centers, and Peripheries: Why in the Plural?*
- **PROF. DR. HABIL. GEORGI KAPRIEV**, Department of the History of Philosophy, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *Bulgaria as a Permanent Imperial Periphery: Longings and Effects*
- **PROF. HABIL. ILIA ILIEV**, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS  
— *Center and Periphery in the Bulgarian-Byzantine Church Relations at the End of the 12th – the Beginning of the 13th Century*

**12:00–13:10**

**PANEL 1 — BETWEEN EAST AND WEST**

**Moderator: Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev**

• **12:00 – 12:20**

**Plenary Speaker**

**PROF. DR. HABIL. IRENA KRASTEVA**, Department of Romance Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Western Conception of Eastern Religiosity: Vedic Sacrifice According to Roberto Calasso*

• **12:20 – 12:40**

• **PROF. DR. HABIL. YORDAN PEEV**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Some Questions Around the Cultural Zones in the Abode of Islam*

• **12:40 – 13:00**

**DR. ANELIYA STOYANOVA**, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The Central Importance of the Periphery: The Habsburg-Ottoman Military Border in the Hungarian Lands During the Early Modern Period*

13:00 – 13:10

Panel Discussion

**13:10 – 14:30**

**LUNCH**

**INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES, BAS**

**14:30 – 15:40 ч.**

**PANEL 2 — FROM EUROPE TO INDIA: CENTER AND PERIPHERY IN ISLAM AND HINDUISM**

**Moderator: Prof. Dr. habil. Irena Krasteva**

• **14:30 – 14:50**

**Plenary Speaker**

**PROF. DR. MILENA BRATOEVA**, Center for the Study of Religions and Department of Classical East Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Vedic Rituals in the 20th and 21st Centuries: National and Transnational Significance*

• **14:50 – 15:10**

ASST. PROF. DR. STOYAN YORDANOV DOKLEV, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Between East and West: Tariq Ramadan’s Vision of European Islam*

• 15:10 – 15:30

SALIH HALIL, PHD STUDENT, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Center – Periphery: The Letters of Bali Efendi of Sofia to the Ottoman Authorities*

15:30 – 15:40

Panel Discussion

**15:40 – 16:50**

**PANEL 3 — INTERTWINED STORIES OF  
THE RELIGIOUS AND THE POLITICAL IMAGINATION**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Alexandrova**

• 15:40 – 16:00

**Plenary Speaker**

ASSOC. PROF. DR. GALINA EVSTATIEVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Perceptions at the Center and the Peripheries: The Eschatological Images of the Islamic Heavenly Houris*

• 16:00 – 16:20

• ASSOC. PROF. DR. SASHKA GEORGIEVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *Collision or Meeting of two Peripheries, or was there a “Culture Shock” in the 13th Century*

• 16:20 – 16:40

• CHIEF ASSIST. DR. FRANCESCO DALL'AGLIO, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *Travels, Adventures, and Misadventures of the Bulgarian and Papal Legates Between Rome and Tărnovo in the Beginning of the 13th Century*

16:40 – 16:50

Panel Discussion

**16:50 – 17:20**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**17:20 – 18:30**

**PANEL 4 — IDENTITIES, RELIGIONS AND GEOPOLITICS**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galina Evstatieva**

• 17:20 – 17:40

**Plenary Speaker**

PROF. DR. ILIAYANA MARCHEVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *Peculiarities of the Relations of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria and the USSR as Periphery and Center during the Cold War*

- **17:40 – 18:00**

**ASST. PROF. DR. GEORGE GHERJIKOV**, Department of Philosophy, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Theological Premises of Political Views*

- **18:00 – 18:20**

**DR. AZIZ NAZMI SHAKIR**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Center and Periphery: Forms of Self-Identification among Muslim Communities in Bulgaria (According to Data from Population Censuses in the Period 1992–2021)*

18:20 – 18:30

Panel Discussion

**18:30 – 19:00**

**General discussion of the first day’s papers**

**Moderator: Prof. Dr. Milena Bratoeva**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023**

**10:00 – 11:10**

**PANEL 5 — SPATIAL AND NORMATIVE ASPECTS OF CENTER AND PERIPHERY**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gergana Ruseva**

- **10:00 – 10:20**

**Plenary Speaker**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. PENKA DANOVA**, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *A Venetian in the Mughal Empire: Religion in the Memoirs of Niccolò Manucci (1638–1717)*

- **10:20 – 10:40**

**ASST. PROF. DR. KRASTYO YORDANOV**, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The Provincial Organization of the Voynuk Institution in Rumelia and the Central Ottoman Authority During the 16th–17th century*

- **10:40 – 11:00**

**ANA MINCHEVA, PHD STUDENT**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Wine in Islam in Terms of the Dichotomy “Center – Periphery”: Norm and Practice in the Middle East and the Balkans*

11:00 – 11:10

Panel Discussion

**11:10 – 11:30**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**11:30 – 12:40**

**PANEL 6 — THE COVERT AND THE OVERT:  
TRANSFORMATIONS BETWEEN CENTER AND  
PERIPHERY**

**Moderator: Prof. DSc. Plamen Makariev**

- **11:30 – 11:50** **Plenary Speaker**  
ASSOC. PROF. DR. GERGANA RUSEVA, Department of Classical East Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *Kalki of Śambhala Will Save the World: Centralization of the Savior Idea in India*
  - **11:50 – 12:10**  
ASST. PROF. DR. IVAN DYULGEROV, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *The Qur’an as Knowledge Revealed to Mankind by “Intelligible” and “Unintelligible” Signs*
  - **12:10 – 12:30**  
MARTIN CHORBADZHIYSKI, PHD STUDENT, Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *Transformations along the Periphery: The Growing Role of Islam in Malta in the Decade Following the Arab Spring*
- 12:30 – 12:40 ч. Panel Discussion

**12:40 – 13:50**

**LUNCH**

**INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES, BAS**

**13:50 – 15:00**

**PANEL 7 — HERESIES, MARGINALITY, AND  
TRANSNATIONALISM**

**Moderator: Prof. Dr. Iliana Marcheva**

- **13:50 – 14:10** **Plenary Speaker**  
ASSOC. PROF. DR. NADEZHDA ALEXandroVA, Department of Bulgarian Literature, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *An Eastern European Perspective to the Heresies in Islam: The Echo of Paul Ricault’s Descriptions in Sofroniy Vrachanski’s Treatise “The Muhammadan System and the Religion of the Muslims”*
- **14:10 – 14:30**  
ASST. DR. YELIS EROLOVA, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, BAS  
— *Religion, Mutual Support, and Donations among Roma Emigrants Abroad and their Left-Behind Relatives (Case Studies from Northeastern Bulgaria)*

• **14:30 – 14:50**

ASST. DR. SIMONA SAMUILOVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The Activity of the National Endowment for Democracy in Bulgaria in the early 1990s: Goals and Implementation*

14:50 – 15:00

Panel Discussion

**15:00 – 16:10**

**PANEL 8 — RELIGIONS AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Penka Danova**

• **15:00 – 15:20**

**Plenary Speaker**

- **PROF. DR. HABIL. PLAMEN MAKARIEV**, Center for the Study of Religions and Department of Philosophy, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Eastern-Orthodox Denomination in Bulgaria and the Public Sphere. Center, Periphery, the Common Language Issue*

• **15:20 – 15:40**

ASST. DR. INNA MANASIEVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The question of the Autonomy of the Ukrainian Church in the Relations Between the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Ukrainian State in 1918*

• **15:40 – 16:00**

- **ASST. PROF. EKATERINA KRASIMIROVA DOKLEVA, PHD STUDENT**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq Between the East and the West: Religious Conversion as Transition from Periphery to Centre*

16:00 – 16:10

Panel Discussion

**16:10 – 16:40**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**16:40 – 17:50**

**PANEL 9 — GLOBAL CENTERS AND TRANS-REGIONAL INTERACTIONS**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova**

• **16:40 – 17:00**

**Plenary Speaker**

ASSOC. PROF. DR. ELENA KOSTOVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *On the Role and Place of a Dubrovnik Chaplain, Reflected in His Testament from the Late 15th Century*

- 17:00 – 17:20

ASST. PROF. DR. NADEZHDA YANKOVSKA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The Eastern Bloc Activity in Africa during the Brezhnev Era (1964 – 1982)*

- 17:20 – 17:40

ASST. PROF. DR. MIRENA MITOVA, Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *The Role of the “Periphery” for the Economic Development of the “Center” in the Strategy of the United States in the Marshall Plan and the Point Four Program (1948–1953)*

17:40 – 17:50

Panel Discussion

**17:50 – 19:00**

**PANEL 10 — REFORMS IN THE PERIPHERY: EASTERN EUROPE AND THE ARAB WORLD**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Kostova**

- 17:50 – 18:10

**Plenary Speaker**

- ASSOC. PROF. DR. NADYA FILIPOVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and the Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

— *“Side Effects” of the Partnership Between Hafez al-Assad and the Soviet Block*

- 18:10 – 18:30

PANAR VAID, Graduate Student (Master’s Programme “Middle East Studies with Arabic”), Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Women’s Activism in Tunisia after the Jasmine Revolution: Socio-Political Challenges and Trends*

- 18:30 – 18:50

YOANA STOYANOVA, Graduate Student (Master’s Programme “Middle East Studies with Arabic”), Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Tunisia and the Arab Authoritarianism in the Maghreb*

18:50 – 19:00

Plenary Session

**19:00–19:30**

**CONCLUDING DISCUSSION**

**Moderator: Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev**

**20:00**

Dinner

## REGULATIONS

- *The papers of all participants may be up to 20 minutes long, and 10 minutes are planned at the end of each session for panel discussion and specific questions.*
- *The plenary papers also introduce conceptual issues, serving as a link between them and the papers in the panel in the respective session. The presenters of the sessions will strictly monitor that the papers do not exceed the 20-minute maximum.*
- *Additional time is allotted for discussion and questions on the presented papers in the general and closing discussions at the end of the first and second day of the conference, respectively.*

## CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

*President:*

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and the Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

*Members:*

- Prof. Dr. habil. Plamen Makariev (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galina Evstatieva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Kostova (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), PhD Student Ana Mincheva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)

## SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

- Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Prof. Dr. Daniel Vachkov (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
- Prof. Dr. Iliana Marcheva (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

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